

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



Housekeepers' Chat

Thursday, January 30, 1930.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Beauty in the Home." Quoted article by Maria Morris, K. S. A. C.,
Manhattan, Kansas. Recipe from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Household Account Book."

--ooOoo--

"What would you do," asked my Next-Door Neighbor, "what would you do, Aunt Sammy, if you had received, among your Christmas gifts, a polka-dot china cow?"

"A polka-dot china cow!" I repeated. "Why, what in the world could anyone do with a polka-dot china cow?"

"That's just what I want to know," said my Neighbor. "You see, Aunt Sammy, this cow is supposed to be a cream pitcher--can you imagine anything worse?"

"Not much worse," I admitted. "Unless you include purple salt shakers that masquerade as ducks, and Mary-Alice's bright-hued centerpiece of wax, that calls itself fruit, and her red roses made of paper, and --"

"Oh dear!" exclaimed my Neighbor. "Why will people give such unnatural gifts? These things have no place in homes which want sincere beauty. For a beautiful object must show its use at first sight. It should not be 'tricky.' I was taught that a beautiful object is always simple, concise, with dignified fitness of purpose. Isn't that true, Aunt Sammy? Here, let me read you something written by an artist friend of mine.

"'Beauty has a plan,' she says. 'It is a restful plan. Do most of the objects in a room have straight lines? Then a chair with many curlicues is out of place. Are rugs rectangular, and placed straight with the lines of a room of the same shape? Then the piano will look best set straight along the side of the room, and not cross-wise of the corner. Small objects may be placed informally, but large ones should follow a plan. Order and restraint are in nature's scheme of beauty.'

"'Beauty is appropriate. Imagine wearing a white satin gown while scrubbing a floor! Even the most beautiful object in the world must be in its proper setting or it becomes ludicrous. It is not always easy to buy furnishings that belong together and to the house. A picture may be too large for the room. The fussy cushion with glaring colors and dust-catching ruffles will not look well with plain furnishings.'

"'Simple furnishings arranged in an orderly way are beautiful. Think of two homes: One where there is a place for everything and everything in its place,

and another where there is always a jumble and no one can find anything. Which home is beautiful? In order there is beauty.'

"In simplicity, too, we find beauty. Have you ever sat at a table where there were so many big and little dishes around you, you felt awkward? One does not see the beauty of simplicity in over-filled table or room.'

"There," concluded my Neighbor, "I am fully convinced that my polka-dot china cow is not a thing of beauty, and some day, when no one is looking, the china cow will disappear. Have you any objections, Aunt Sammy?"

"No, indeed. Let my salt-shaker ducks go with the china cow. By the way, where did you get the pretty new tea-towels?"

"Down-town," said my friend. "I decided that perhaps if I had some new tea-towels, with bright yellow borders, I wouldn't mind doing the dishes. Do you know, Aunt Sammy, that dish-washing is the task I like least, in housework? I read the other day that most housekeepers have a 'black beast,' as the French would say, an ugly beast that hides behind lurking doors and jumps out at us when we least expect it, taking the joy out of things.

"Of course, some women have so systematized their work, and have such good equipment for doing it, that there isn't any 'black beast' in their house at all, and keeping house is a daily pleasure. But most of us have at least one small 'black beast.'

"One housewife says hers is looking forward to housework. Another says hers is planning meals. Still another declares hers is cleaning up after other people. Well, I'm sure that mine is dish-washing. So I decided to take the advice of the person who wrote the article, and either slay the 'black beast,' or keep him in subjection so that he would give me as little trouble as possible. First of all, a woman who dislikes dish-washing should 'face her problem squarely.' I was prepared to do that. If possible, she should spend a few dollars getting the most attractive and most effective utensils to use in dishwashing. She should provide herself with the sort of soap she likes best, and keep on hand a good supply of dish towels and dish cloths. There is no practical way of doing dishes by machinery in the small family, and the scheme of having paper plates and wooden spoons that can be thrown away has never proved satisfactory either. The only thing to do is to make dish washing so attractive that you won't mind doing it.'

"So," concluded my Neighbor, "I figured that if I'd buy some new dish cloths, and some nice soft linen tea-towels, with sunshiny yellow bands, and wave them in the face of the ugly black beast of dish-washing, he'd give one final growl, and leave my kitchen forever. Is that a good idea, Aunt Sammy?"

As I told my Neighbor, any idea is good, that makes dish-washing a pleasure instead of a dreaded task.

I have one recipe to broadcast today, but let's answer a question first. This question is from a young bride, just married, who wants help in planning a budget. I am advising her to send 50 cents to the Government Printing Office,

in Washington, D. C., and get one of the excellent loose-leaf household account books designed by the Bureau of Home Economics. Then she and her husband can work out their own spending plan. For people who want to get the most for their money, and save some for the future, this loose-leaf household account book is a godsend. You can get it for 50 cents, from the Government Printing Office, in Washington, D. C.

The recipe for today is Sand Tarts, those delicious little brown-sugar cookies which are so nice to serve at a tea, or with punch, at a party. Do you remember, some weeks ago, when I told you I had lost my recipe for Sand Tarts? I looked high, and I looked low, and I looked in between, but there was not a trace of my treasured cooky recipe. I knew I had broadcast it once before, so the logical thing to do was to ask you for it. And I thank the friend who was kind enough to copy the recipe, and send it to me. There are nine ingredients in this recipe, as follows:

1/2 cup butter	1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup light brown sugar	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 egg	3 tablespoons granulated sugar, and
2 cups sifted flour	Almonds or pecans, cut in halves.
2 teaspoons baking powder.	

Nine ingredients, for Sand Tarts: (Repeat).

Cream the half cup of butter. Add the 3/4 cup of light brown sugar, gradually, then the well-beaten egg. Stir in the sifted dry ingredients, that is, the flour, baking powder, and salt. On a lightly-floured board, make a roll of the dough, about 3 inches in diameter. Wrap well in waxed paper. Let stand overnight, in a cold place. In the morning, slice wafer thin, with a sharp knife. Sprinkle with a mixture of the cinnamon and granulated sugar. Press a nut in the center of each cookie. Bake in a moderate oven, between 350 degrees to 375 degrees Fahrenheit, for about 8 minutes, or until lightly browned. Store in air-tight containers.

Friday: "Soups for the School Boy."

###

